

Blaster Master: Blasting Again

Blaster Master: Blasting Again (known simply as ***Blaster Master*** in Japan) is the fifth game in the *Blaster Master* series. It was released for the PlayStation. The release of the original game had a different plot, but this title is a follow-up to the *Worlds of Power* adaptation in all regions. It was released in Japan on July 13, 2000, and was supposed to be released in North America on November 7, 2000,^[1] but issues with the game caused it to be delayed until it got a release on May 6, 2001.

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Introduction

Blaster Master: Blasting Again is a third-person 3D platformer that puts the player at the controls of the high-tech, all-terrain combat vehicle SOPHIA J-7. The player navigates through several areas of caverns to uncover and ultimately stop the treacherous plans of a mysterious alien race of Lightning Beings. On some occasions the player's character must exit SOPHIA and go solo through alien complexes. As the game progresses, the player will earn upgrades for SOPHIA, and be able to salvage weapon upgrades for the pilot. The player views cut-scenes that convey the key elements in the story The character will fight a boss at the end of each stage.

Production

Although the game is a sequel to the original *Blaster Master* for the NES, the writers of *Blasting Again* used elements from the *Worlds of Power* novelization of *Blaster Master* in the game's storyline. Particularly, the character of Eve, an original character from the novel who was not in the NES game, was introduced in *Blasting Again* as the wife of Jason and the mother of Roddy and Elfie. The novel's author, Peter Lerangis, felt "honored" for the privilege.^[2]

Story

Blaster Master: Blasting Again



Developer(s)	Sunsoft
Publisher(s)	Crave Entertainment
Director(s)	Kiyoshi Kitabayashi
Producer(s)	Naoki Matsunaga
Programmer(s)	Kiyoshi Kitabayashi
Writer(s)	Junji Miyoshi Naoki Matsunaga
Composer(s)	Satoshi Asano
Platform(s)	PlayStation
Release	JP: July 13, 2000 NA: May 6, 2001
Genre(s)	Action-adventure
Mode(s)	Single-player

There once was a boy named Jason, who had a pet frog. One day the frog, bored with his microenvironment, decided to explore the world. Hopping outside, he fell into a mysterious hole in the backyard. The tiny frog landed on a pile of boxes containing radioactive materials. The exposure to the materials led to an immediate mutation, and the frog swelled to ten times his original size. Unfazed, the big frog hopped off down the mysterious tunnel he found himself in, to see what he could see. Jason, meanwhile, upset at his pet's disappearance, began searching frantically. He too found the mysterious hole, but when he reached the bottom, there was a strange vehicle waiting for him - Sophia III. And, since nobody else was around, Jason thought he'd drive Sophia around to look for his frog. Donning a battle suit he finds with the vehicle, Jason embarks on a journey that will forever change his life.

History

Jason encounters an alien race, known as the Lightning Beings, living in caverns beneath the Earth's crust. These aliens have begun preparations for a hostile takeover of the planet. Luckily for humanity, Jason *really* wants his frog back. Eventually Jason squares off with the mighty Plutonium Boss, leader of the Lightning Beings, and defeats him. The aliens, leaderless, scatter, and from afar, Jason watches as their world collapses upon them...watches with Sophia, and his frog.

But Jason's combat with the Lightning Beings was far from over. He learns that Sophia is actually a combat vehicle developed by another alien race trying to stop the parasitic exploits of the Lightning Beings. Teaming up with Eve, an alien Sophia pilot, Jason sallies forth to mop up the remaining Lightning Beings. Successful in combat, with the prospect of lasting peace before them, Jason and Eve marry and settle on Earth, and have two children named Elfie and Roddy

Prelude

Five years ago, Eve died. A couple of years later, Jason is killed in a ferocious attack by Lightning Beings. With the planet threatened by mysterious geologic phenomena and natural disasters, Elfie and Roddy take up the legacy of their parents, and, though young and with little experience, pledge to protect humanity from the evil machinations of the Lightning Beings. Sophia has been modified and rebuilt through the years, by both Jason and Elfie, and now exists as Sophia J-7. Elfie continues to develop new parts to upgrade Sophia's abilities. The story begins with Elfie sending Roddy in on a standard surveillance mission...

Gameplay

The player's character is Roddy, a sixteen-year-old boy at the helm of an all-terrain combat vehicle, SOPHIA. The player pilots SOPHIA through a labyrinth of 3D rooms in search of clues to the enemy's movements. Occasionally the player will encounter enemy installations or limiting topography that will force Roddy to leave Sophia, and advance on foot. As the game progresses, new equipment will be made available for SOPHIA, allowing access to new areas.

Overview

The gameplay is based primarily on using jumps and maneuvering to traverse obstacles while simultaneously battling foes. Since the player is punished implicitly for missing jumps over bottomless pits this game can be considered within the genre of 3D platformers. The camera follows the SOPHIA's viewing angle when in the vehicle, but having dismounted, the camera must be controlled manually by the player. Targeting while running may therefore be seen by some as difficult because of the combination of having to adjust the camera pan angle manually. This difficulty can be exacerbated by the fact that when the player chooses to move laterally from the angle the character is facing, strafing is done literally by jumping. This means that once the player has committed to dodging in a certain direction, it cannot be changed. Unlike SOPHIA, the player cannot initiate a lateral dodge movement after leaving the ground. The graphics are typical of the 32-bit gaming era, and models are original and varied. The game has a load sequence between each room or when transferring Roddy back to SOPHIA when on foot. Load times can be shortened if playing on a PS2 by changing the disc speed on the PS driver from within the PlayStation BIOS. Sound effects tend to be recycled throughout the game, and each level has its own background theme music.

Enemies

Bosses are large creatures with separate health gauges for their various limbs, components, or parts. Bosses will be encountered both while driving Sophia and while exploring outside the vehicle.

Reception

The game received "average" reviews according to the review aggregation website [GameRankings](#)^[3]

Reception	
Aggregate score	
Aggregator	Score
GameRankings	74% ^[3]
Review scores	
Publication	Score
<i>EGM</i>	6.5/10 ^[4]
<i>Game Informer</i>	5/10 ^[1]
<i>GameSpot</i>	7.7/10 ^[5]
<i>OPM</i> (US)	★★★★★ ^[6]
<i>OPM</i> (UK)	3/10 ^[7]

References

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- "Blaster Master: Blasting Again".*Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* November 2000.
- "Blaster Master".*Official UK PlayStation Magazine* Future Publishing (62). September 2000.

External links

- Blaster Master: Blasting Again*at MobyGames
- Blaster Master Underground (BMUG)- a complete record of all games in the series, including external media and background development history on each game.

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